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DOI:

[10.1111/1468-229X.12054](https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-229X.12054)

*Document Version*

Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication record in King's Research Portal](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Readman, P. (2014). 'The Cliffs are not Cliffs': The Cliffs of Dover and National Identities in Britain, c.1750–c.1950. *HISTORY*, 99(335), 241-269. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-229X.12054>

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## **‘The Cliffs are not Cliffs’: The Cliffs of Dover and National Identities in Britain**

**c.1750 – c.1950**

Since the publication of Hugh Cunningham’s landmark *History Workshop* article on the language of patriotism, which first appeared in 1981, the study of national identity – or rather identities – has loomed very large in scholarship on modern British history.<sup>1</sup> Discourses of national identity have been discovered in a bewildering range of contexts, from the red benches of the House of Lords to followers of the red flag of socialism, from the great national galleries to the music hall stage, from Cotswold villages to far-flung corners of the Empire.<sup>2</sup> National identity seems to be present everywhere and a point of reference for the study of almost anything: gender relations, warfare, politics, social experiences, colonial encounters, cultural productions, and so on. One area of study where national identity might be expected to figure strongly is that of landscape: all nation-states occupy physical territories and all nations claim homelands, the particular landscape features of which have often functioned as powerful markers of identity. The interconnections between landscape and national identity are arguably strongest of all in the case of islands, where territorial integrity and national separateness can seem almost divinely ordained. Such was the case in Britain, whose inhabitants have long celebrated the felicitous insularity of the sceptre’d isle, made safe from continental contaminations by the English Channel, that ‘wise dispensation of Providence’ as British prime minister William Gladstone described it in 1870.<sup>3</sup>

Cut off by the Channel, Britain and British identities were inextricably connected to the sea. Late nineteenth-century historians such as J. A. Froude and E. A. Freeman had no compunction in describing the inhabitants of the British Isles as ‘folk of the sea’ for whom the sea was their ‘natural home’, while the Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson described the sea as ‘our approach and bulwark... the scene

of our greatest triumphs and dangers, and we are accustomed in lyrical strains to claim it as our own'.<sup>4</sup>

The sea, then, was British: it carried the trade that sustained the workshop of the world, it helped provide the means of exploration and colonial expansion; it was seen as the happy-hunting-ground of the Royal Navy and nursery of the national character. Yet while it might have promoted outward-looking sensibilities in some – not least in relation to imperialism – there was another side to Britain's maritime identity, and this was arguably more important. Britain's relationship with the sea promoted what might be termed a discrete sense of islandhood, a constellation of patriotic sentiments that focused on the homeland.

Witnesses to this insularity are not hard to find. In 1961, Mervyn Morris returned home to Jamaica after spending three years as an undergraduate at Oxford University. While Morris was at Oxford, two English sociologists had sent him a questionnaire inviting foreign students to write articles about their experiences in England. Morris produced one of these articles, a version of which appeared in the *Caribbean Quarterly* for December 1962. In his narrative, Morris suggested that his encounter with England taught him 'the fundamental lesson of nationalism', a lesson imparted before he had even set foot on English soil:

I learnt this half an hour away from England, approaching the cliffs of Dover. There was excitement among the English on board; I looked, but the cliffs seemed very ordinary to me. And then I realized that of course the cliffs are not cliffs: to the Englishmen they are a symbol of something greater, of the return from a land of strangers, of the return home. Nothing is more important in nationalism than the feeling of ownership.<sup>5</sup>

Morris's observation testifies to the important role played by landscape in providing a focus for national feeling; landscape, and distinctive landscapes in particular, have functioned as powerful symbols of national identity. The Rhine, the Swiss Alps and the Norwegian Fjords are obvious examples here. Yet, it is striking that relatively little attention has been paid to the relationship between landscape and nation by historians.<sup>6</sup> This is despite the extensive discussion of this relationship in theoretical writings on nations and nationalism, and the more focused empirical research within other disciplines, geography most notably.<sup>7</sup> In the British context, historical geographers such as Stephen Daniels, David Lowenthal, David Matless, Denis Cosgrove and Catherine Brace have done a good deal to extend understanding of the relationship between landscape and national identities, yet historians have not on the whole followed their lead.<sup>8</sup> Historians have not been shy of exploring the interconnectedness of English identity, the rural and the natural environment generally, with Martin Wiener's *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* stimulating much work – and no little debate – on the prevalence and influence of rural-nostalgic versions of Englishness.<sup>9</sup> But their treatments typically lack locational specificity. Types of landscape are identified and their cultural purchase analysed (as Alun Howkins did in an important essay on the 'south country'),<sup>10</sup> yet particular landscape features are given much less attention by historians, being dealt with in passing as part of a more general treatment, rather than subjected to thorough study.<sup>11</sup> As a consequence, the British historical understanding of the relationship between place and national identities is underdeveloped, and more historical work on the capacity of particular landscapes to encapsulate national sentiment and identities is needed. What follows will explore the ways in which the cliffs of Dover formed one such landscape, coming to stand for insular, sea-girt, commercial-maritime ideas of nationhood – ideas significantly disconnected from imperial ties of belonging. Understood as historical witnesses to past time, they represented the continuity of the national homeland, acting as powerful symbols of defence, defiance and difference across the modern

period. More generally, the article also seeks to show how and why certain valued landscapes – like the white cliffs – operated on men and women with the patriotic force that Morris observed.

Different landscapes, of course, are valued for different reasons and are interpreted by different people in different ways. This is a function of the fact that landscape is not objectively ‘out there’; it is, as D. W. Meinig has put it, ‘defined by our vision and interpreted by our minds’, with any given landscape being ‘composed not of what lies before our eyes but what lies within our heads’.<sup>12</sup> It is for this reason that the same natural features can be seen quite differently by two people: Morris looked at the same block of chalk as his English travelling companions (in terms of physical substance it was identical), yet their experiences varied markedly – they were each looking at a different landscape. It follows that all perceptions of landscape are essentially subjective, a point suggested by Theodor Adorno some time ago in the context of his discussion of natural beauty, which he described as necessarily indeterminate and ‘undefinable’ by any formal set of criteria.<sup>13</sup> But this is not to say that no generalisations can safely be made about why certain landscapes are valued by certain people: from the historical evidence, patterns of collective agreement can readily be discerned. Landscapes valued by members of any given national or social group are valued because they have particular attributes that members of the group deem valuable. Beauty is one of these attributes: landscapes have often been prized on account of their perceived scenic appeal, and especially their distinctiveness, in Britain as elsewhere in the world. Indeed, it could be argued that such considerations play a particularly important role in the construction of landscapes seen as national symbols, their claimed uniqueness helping to reify national identities.

Yet any judgements concerning the value of any landscape – including its scenic value – are not merely functions of (perceived) physical characteristics; because landscape is a human construct, exogenous factors inevitably come into play. One of the most important of these is authenticity – an

observation which has featured in theoretical writing on aesthetics for many years, indeed centuries.<sup>14</sup> Like forged art, nature known to be ‘fake’ – to use the environmental philosopher Robert Elliot’s term – does not exert the same appeal as nature deemed ‘original’. In judgements of the value of any given natural landscape, genealogy matters.<sup>15</sup> This line of thinking can be extended beyond the realm of philosophical theory, however; for present purposes, the point it suggests is that appreciation of the value of a landscape depends on factors other than physical properties in and of themselves. Crucial here is what may be termed the associational value of landscape, the connections made between landscape and human culture (art, literature, music, etc.), science (geology, for example), and – perhaps most important of all – history. In short, judgements about the value of any landscape are powerfully affected by knowledge, perfect or imperfect, relating to the landscape in question. As the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan has remarked, appreciation of landscape is ‘fleeting unless one’s eyes are kept to it for some other reason, either the recall of historical events that hallowed the scene or the recall of its underlying reality in geology and structure’.<sup>16</sup> It will be argued here that in the British context associational value is vital to any understanding of the relationship between landscape and national identity between the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries. It was not so much the physical appearance of the cliffs of Dover – although this was certainly important – that bound them so tightly to discourses of nationhood, but the associations they triggered in the minds of the British. After all, in terms of natural physical properties, there were – and are – many similarities between the white cliffs of Cap Blanc Nez in northeast France from their similarly white if somewhat more famous counterparts in southeast Kent, on the other side of the Channel.

## I

The cliffs of Dover attracted relatively scant attention in contemporary discourse before the middle of the eighteenth century. That they were an important landmark was beyond doubt, as is evident from the map of Britain produced in Italy in 1546. This, the first engraved map of British Isles apart from those in editions of Ptolemy's *Geographia*, featured a naturalistic depiction of the white cliffs, in miniature, integrated into its overall design.<sup>17</sup> But in the written record, fleeting allusion was the norm even in works that otherwise had much to say about the town of Dover or the county of Kent. In his famous *Britannia*, a 'chorographicall description' of Britain published in English in 1610, William Camden alluded to 'a mighty ridge of steppe high Cliffs, *Cicero* termeth them *mores magnificas*, that is, *Statelý* Cliffes bringing forth *sampier* in great plenty', but said little more.<sup>18</sup> It appears likely that while the cliffs certainly made a powerful visual impression, they did not attract much in the way of positive value judgements. Writing in the 1720s, Daniel Defoe felt the Dover 'coast affords nothing of note'.<sup>19</sup>

By Defoe's time, however, attitudes were changing. Previously, most cultivated commentators had found the sea and its shores disagreeable, with sea cliffs – like mountains – much more likely to provoke sentiments of horror than pleasure: landscapes of danger, they were to be avoided rather than sought out, let alone celebrated. The mid-eighteenth century onwards, however, saw increased cultural interest in coastal landscapes, particularly those wild or rocky in character. Topographical and travelogue accounts lauded the 'striking appearance' of the 'lofty white cliffs' at Dover.<sup>20</sup> Ann Radcliffe's description of her journey to Holland and Germany in 1794 featured admiration for the prominent landmark of Shakespeare's Cliff, just to the southwest of Dover town, which she thought as 'sublime as the name it bears'.<sup>21</sup> By 1818, the view of the Dover coast from the direction of Walmer had become 'one of the most striking prospects that imagination can conceive'.<sup>22</sup>

The effect of this shift in attitudes, uneven at first but decisive by the turn of the nineteenth century, grew stronger and was more widely disseminated as time passed. In the Victorian and

Edwardian eras improved communication, combined with the expansion of popular tourism, dramatically increased the number of British men and women who actually saw the white cliffs with their own eyes. Although Dover enjoyed a rather fleeting early-to-mid nineteenth-century popularity as a tourist destination in its own right (*The Lady's Newspaper* commended its 'stupendous perpendicular cliffs' in 1847),<sup>23</sup> the expansion of cross-channel traffic was the crucial factor here.<sup>24</sup> (Not the least reason for this was the perception that the cliffs were shown to their best advantage when viewed from the seaward side: 'Dover can only be seen aright by one who comes to it from the sea', as Byron's Don Juan did as he was blown towards 'Albion's earliest beauties, / Thy cliffs, *dear* Dover!')<sup>25</sup> But aside from the effects of transport and tourism, these years also saw hugely important developments in technologies of image production, which also served to embed the cliffs in the emergent discourse of national heritage.<sup>26</sup> Innovations in engraving techniques made the mass production of lithographic prints possible from the 1830s on. As a consequence, artistic depictions of landscapes such as the white cliffs became much more available – and affordable – than previously, with J. M. W. Turner's work in particular reaching a wide audience in this way.<sup>27</sup> Later in the nineteenth century, photographs and other means of image reproduction furthered the process of commodification and dissemination. In December 1881, for example, the Kensington Fine Art Association offered an oleograph reproduction of a painting by H. Hillier. Entitled 'Dover Pier and Harbour by Moonlight', it depicted the port at night, sheltered by the white cliffs. Advertised in newspapers around the country, not only those of southern counties, but also in publications such as the *Manchester Times*, it was billed as a picture 'that will commend itself to all Englishmen, on account of the interest that is felt in the historic old town, watched as it is by the famous castle and the cliff which Shakespeare has described in language that will endure for all time'.<sup>28</sup>

The nineteenth-century popularisation – and nationalisation – of the image of Dover cliffs could simply be read as reflecting changing aesthetic tastes in landscape. But while it may be that the



landscape came to be seen as compatible with mainstream Victorian ideas of the picturesque – as popularised by Turner and others – this was not sufficient on its own. In order to explain the appeal and significance of the white cliffs over the course of the two hundred years or so after the middle of the eighteenth century, it is necessary to consider additional factors. Beneath the adulatory descriptions of the cliffs’ appearance as ‘striking’ (a word very frequently used) lurked influences other than the narrowly aesthetic, especially those connected to the associational value of landscape. It is to this associational value to which we now turn.

To begin with, the white cliffs were associated with the nation, or rather nations – England in particular, but also Britain (the two often being conflated). This alone did much to account for the esteem in which the cliffs were held. The association was not new, of course. ‘Albion’ had been used as a synonym for Britain or England for many centuries (not least in Camden’s *Britannia*),<sup>29</sup> the word deriving from the Latin ‘albus’, meaning white: in a real sense, the white cliffs of the south coast had already defined the nation. That said, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a marked strengthening of this association. Descanting on the ‘fascination’ of Dover cliffs, one guidebook remarked how ‘in the white walls of this part of the coast the popular fancy sees something indefinable, indicative of Albion’s glory, emblematic of British pride’; while another claimed ‘these strange white cliffs... stand for England’ perhaps even more than ‘the very lion upon her standard’ because “‘Albion” was a name, at least in Europe, centuries before any national banner waved upon her shores’.<sup>30</sup> In 1908, the art historian and collector W. G. Rawlinson offered the opinion that Turner’s ‘Straits of Dover’, which had appeared in the artist’s still enormously-popular *Picturesque Views in England and Wales*, was a ‘scene... so *English*, so exactly what one sees on landing at Dover on a sunny, windy day’.<sup>31</sup> [See Fig. 1.]

As reflected in this reading of Turner's picture, the developing association between the cliffs, the sea and nationality was congruent with the strengthening of the (curiously understudied) conceptualisation of Britain as an 'island nation' in contemporary cultural discourse.<sup>32</sup> The final surrender of Calais to France in 1558 had laid the foundations of the view that the Channel was Britain's frontier, and this view was further bolstered by the spread of Enlightenment-generated ideas that nation-statehood was properly defined by natural boundaries such as seas, rivers and mountains. By the nineteenth century, with the strength and successes of the Royal Navy increasingly a source of self-congratulation for the British, the connections between the sea, insularity and national greatness were axiomatic.<sup>33</sup> Notoriously, Britain's geographical separateness from the continent was a matter of celebration, and when combined with increasingly secure geological knowledge helped reinforce the longstanding idea that British nationhood was naturally (or providentially) ordained. In 1801, Charles Dibdin 'rejoiced' in the thought that Britain had been separated from continent 'either by an earthquake or a partial deluge' as 'it is self-evident that whatever gave us our insular situation laid the foundation of our glory'.<sup>34</sup> It was a message that was much repeated over the course of the century and beyond, not least in educational books aimed at the young.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, its strength and persistence does much to explain why proposals to construct a tunnel under the English Channel met with the hostility they did. Early efforts in the 1880s and 1890s foundered on the objection, in the words of E. A. Freeman, a prominent opponent of the tunnel, that it would make Britons 'cease to be islanders, and become continentals'.<sup>36</sup> (It was the same story with later attempts made in the interwar period, and even in 1975 the Labour Cabinet minister Barbara Castle could confess her relief that Tony Crosland had shelved the plans then being considered, her sentiments being founded on 'a kind of earthy feeling that an island is an island and should not be violated'.)<sup>37</sup>

This patriotic solicitude for Britain remaining *virgo intacta* – as Lord Randolph Churchill had phrased it in opposing Channel Tunnel legislation in June 1888 – was of course sharpened by the fact that the proposals for a tunnel envisaged it beginning at or near the white cliffs. (Indeed, Sir Edward Watkin's schemes of the 1880s and 1890s called for the submarine link to begin at Shakespeare's Cliff, a promontory just outside Dover so called on account of its associations with *King Lear* – of which more later.)<sup>38</sup> In the context of the prevailing 'Rule Britannia' discourses of nationality the cliffs had emerged as a powerful emblem of an insular, commercial-maritime national identity, one shaped less by the expanding overseas empire than Britain's place in Europe, particularly as affected by historical rivalries with continental powers, especially France. It was this identity that the tunnel threatened to subvert. To a significant extent, from the nineteenth century onwards the cliffs came to stand as a synecdoche of British separateness from the continent, of Britain's status as an island apart from the rest of Europe, functioning as a landscape of difference for the inhabitants of an island kingdom. Dover's cliffs thus became a marker of Britishness as well as Englishness. This was important, as in contrast to the arguably more 'cultural' identities of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, Britishness has not generally been associated with landscape features, being linked rather to the state, government and civic life, or perhaps empire and the economy.<sup>39</sup> As a unique landscape of British identity, the cliffs did important ideological work, helping to territorialise meanings of Britishness, so supporting sentiments of belonging not just to one of the component nations of the British Isles, but to the British nation-state as a whole.

## II

The nationalistic deployment of the white cliffs reflected their continuing association not only with British insularity, but with the defence of the British Isles against foreign military threats, particularly invasion. The association between Dover and defence was of long standing, with Matthew Paris's description of the town as 'the lock and key' of the kingdom being much quoted over the centuries.<sup>40</sup> Dover's great castle, and its antiquity as a fortified site, did much to contribute to this, of course. But as powerful a symbol of defence and defiance the castle undoubtedly was, it was rarely considered in isolation from the cliffs upon which it perched, and from which it derived much of its iconographic force. Turner's watercolour *Dover, from Shakespeare's Cliff* (c.1825), is a classic rendition of the scene, showing the guns of the modern fortifications engaged in practice firing (in the direction of France), with the medieval castle prominent in the background. [See Fig. 2.] In fact, the cliffs of Dover were themselves potent emblems of national defence, with or without the Castle: metaphorically as well as physically, they functioned as ramparts. In nineteenth- and early twentieth-century publications, they were described as 'white walls', as 'natural defences of the most impregnable character'.<sup>41</sup> A great deal was made of the story that when Julius Caesar arrived at the Kentish coast, the sight of heavily armed Britons thronging the white cliffs had encouraged him to seek a landing place elsewhere, but they were as much natural fortifications of the mind than anything else. In 1878 *Black's* guide to Kent commended Dover 'with its walls of glittering chalk, majestic and impregnable', as 'a fitting symbol of English Power'.<sup>42</sup>

The symbolic significance of the cliffs in this regard is borne out by the fact that artistic depictions often exaggerated their height, so emphasising their status as bulwarks or battlements. Those of Turner provide a good case in point. The artist first visited Dover in 1792, and returned on several occasions in later years, the town and its environs being a frequent subject for his later topographical watercolours.<sup>43</sup> Featuring the fortifications of the Western Heights in the foreground, along with a

soldier looking out to sea and the practice firing of guns, *Dover, from Shakespeare's Cliff* presents one example, representing the cliffs as being significantly higher than they were in reality, as does the artist's less militaristic *Dover Castle* (1822).<sup>44</sup> And in *Dover* (1825), so great was Turner's artistic licence that John Ruskin was moved to object that he had 'lost the real character of Dover Cliffs by making the town at their feet three times lower in proportionate height than it really is'.<sup>45</sup> [See Fig. 3.]

The representation of the cliffs as towering natural battlements reflected perceptions of their military significance, the heights around the town having been extensively fortified in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (William Cobbett famously complained of the expense incurred in making 'a great chalk-hill a honey-comb' in which to hide British soldiers from Frenchmen).<sup>46</sup> But it also reflected more generalised anxieties about the threat of invasion, with the experience of the Napoleonic Wars being an important factor here. Yet the fears persisted long after 1815, deep into the Victorian period and beyond. Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état* in 1851 was followed by a slew of invasion scares. Concerns about the designs of a resurgent France led to the further fortification of England's southern coastline and in 1859 the creation of the Volunteer Force – a locally-organised precursor to the twentieth-century Territorial Army and home guard. France's defeat by Prussia in 1870-1 did not end such anxieties, partly because distrust of the French was so deep-seated (witness the controversies surrounding the early Channel tunnel proposals), but mainly because an assertive imperial Germany promoted renewed fears of invasion – as manifested in the outcry provoked by publications such as G. T. Chesney's *Battle of Dorking* (1871), to give an early example, and William Le Queux's *Daily Mail*-serialised *Invasion of 1910*, to give a rather later one.<sup>47</sup>

For all their xenophobia and sensationalism, these Victorian and Edwardian scare stories were not entirely irrational, nor were they dismissed as such by contemporary opinion. Advances in technology had made invasion seem all the more possible. Steam power meant ships could operate at

much higher speeds than previously, making the threat of a surprise attack – or ‘bolt from the blue’ – loom larger. It also meant they could operate independently of tides and winds: the unpredictability of the weather could no longer thwart a determined enemy, as arguably it had done in 1588 with the Spanish Armada. In 1845, Lord Palmerston told the House of Commons that ‘the Channel is no longer a barrier. Steam navigation has rendered that which was before impassable by a military force nothing more than a river passable by a steam bridge’.<sup>48</sup> This was hyperbole, certainly, but the fear was strongly felt, and it intensified as ships became still faster and more manoeuvrable as the century wore on.

Advances in aviation made matters still worse. The 1783 balloon ascent by the Montgolfier brothers may have triggered some prognostications of airborne assault, but the slow speed and ready combustibility of hot-air balloons ensured that such speculations remained on the wilder fringes of alarmist discourse for the next hundred years or so. Winged and motor-powered flight changed things dramatically, however, as it soon became apparent that these were technologies with far more military potential. In his *War in the Air* of 1908, H. G. Wells observed that ‘with the flying machine war alters its character: it ceases to be an affair of “fronts” and becomes an affair of “areas”; neither side, victor or loser, remains immune from the gravest injuries’.<sup>49</sup> The following year, a dramatic demonstration of Wells’s prescience was given by Louis Blériot, who succeeded in flying his monoplane across the English Channel, landing on the cliffs of Dover on 25 July 1909 – a feat which the *Daily Express* greeted with the headline that ‘Britain is no longer an island’.<sup>50</sup>

In the event, the experience of World War One did relatively little to blur the boundaries of the battlefield, notwithstanding the German air raids on southern and eastern England (which in the event caused relatively few casualties). At war’s end, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig was welcomed home in an elaborately choreographed ceremony at Dover, the iconographic significance of his landing site being readily apparent to contemporary commentators as well as the commander-in-chief himself, who in his

speech on disembarkation described the town as ‘keeper of the eastern gate of England’ and ‘guardian of the Narrow Seas’.<sup>51</sup> But in the 1920s and 1930s, as technology advanced, Britons had no doubt that air power had radical implications for national defence, notwithstanding the long associations between Dover, the Channel and the protection of the homeland from the ravages of war. In Virginia Woolf’s novel *Between the Acts*, a village pageant is interrupted by the noise of twelve aeroplanes flying overhead, an incident which prompts one audience member to ask, ‘what’s the channel, come to think of it, if they mean to invade us?’<sup>52</sup> And even in the world of politics, such questions were being posed as well, being more or less explicit in defence policy. Speaking in support of his government’s proposals for re-armament in July 1934, Stanley Baldwin told parliament that ‘since the days of the air, the old frontiers are gone. When you think of the defence of England you no longer think of the chalk cliffs of Dover; you think of the Rhine. [Hon. Members: “Hear, Hear”.] That is where our frontier lies.’<sup>53</sup>

Yet despite the transformative potential of technology, the cliffs of Dover retained their associations with defence, as the ramparts of Britain’s island identity in a wider European context. In 1940, the fall of France re-emphasised the significance of insularity, and for all that the Blitz did to undermine the effectiveness of the Channel as a barrier against deadly attack on the civilian population of the homeland, the white cliffs remained a potent emblem of national resistance to foreign threats. Indeed, if anything their power in this respect grew stronger. With Britain standing alone, the cliffs’ long-established symbolic connections with national identity fused with the reality of their being in the war zone, on the front line. Heavily shelled by German guns at Calais, and inaccessible to the public without a special permit, the Dover coastline acquired the reputation of ‘hell-fire corner’, its landscape featuring in the work of war artists like Paul Nash and Charles Pears, as well as film propaganda such as the GPO Film Unit’s *Britain at Bay*. Dover cliffs’ associations with island defence were further emphasised by the sensational success of Alice Duer Miller’s prose poem, *The White Cliffs*.<sup>54</sup> First

published in New York in August 1940 with a view to encouraging residents of the United States to support the British war effort, the book told the story of a young American woman who had visited Britain before the Great War and ended up making her home there, as the wife (and widow) of an Englishman who was killed in that war, and with whom she had a son. It sold several hundred thousand copies on both sides of the Atlantic, was dramatised for BBC radio and turned into a 1944 Hollywood film. It also provided the inspiration for Nat Burton's wartime hit, 'There'll be Bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover', which was famously immortalised by Vera Lynn's version of it.<sup>55</sup>

The association between the white cliffs and British resilience during World War Two took a strong hold on the popular imagination, being especially connected with the Battle of Britain (upon which the press corps had reported from the vantage point of Shakespeare's Cliff near Dover, the aircraft of the RAF and Luftwaffe wheeling in combat overhead).<sup>56</sup> After the war, the cliffs would be remembered as a landscape of defiant resistance, a mnemonic for the time when Britons stood alone yet unconquered. In 1965, at the death of Sir Winston Churchill, who had visited Dover on a number of occasions during the war and had a home at Chartwell in Kent, the then prime minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home remembered him as an 'indomitable figure – four-square on the cliffs of Dover'.<sup>57</sup> In later years, images of RAF fighters framed against a backdrop of white chalk suffused the material culture of popular memory, from the sleeve illustrations for records and compact discs to the ephemera of commemoration, the *Daily Mirror* marking the sixtieth anniversary of the Battle of Britain with a double-page photograph of a Spitfire flying alongside Dover cliffs.<sup>58</sup> That war in the air should be linked in this way to the cliffs provides a striking illustration of the ideological power of landscapes of maritime identity; the sea and the coast, as much as the sky, provided the backdrop to victory.

### III



If the white cliffs have functioned as an emblem of national security and defiance, and as a marker of difference projected against continental adversaries of various kinds, from invasion armadas to sporting rivals, then they have also functioned as a symbol of the national home and homecoming. This is significant not least because of the importance of the idea of home in the construction of British national identities: as the author of one elementary school textbook saw fit to declare, the ‘chief characteristic of English men and women is their love of “home”’.<sup>59</sup> Guarding the historical ‘gateway to England’, the cliffs framed the port which for many centuries was the main route in and out of the country, a town which in the sixteenth century William Camden had judged to be ‘a place of passage of all other most haunted’, of which ‘it was provided in old time by a speciall Statute, that no man going forth of the realme in pilgrimage, should els where embark and take sea’.<sup>60</sup> The traffic handled by Dover port increased steadily from the mid-eighteenth century on, with the introduction of a regular steam packet service to Calais in 1818 and the arrival of the railway at Dover in 1844 greatly facilitating access to and from the continent. These developments, combined with the growth of international trade and tourism, meant that by the 1890s the number of travellers on the Dover-Calais route totalled around three hundred thousand per year – a figure that would increase still further in the twentieth century.

As more people gained first-hand experience of the white cliffs through journeying to and from Dover, the landscape’s association with home gained greater strength. It is of course the case that ‘home’ has had wildly varying meanings for Britons, not least because in the English language the word can stand for so many different things – house, neighbourhood, village, county, town, city, country, nation.<sup>61</sup> In all cases, however, the concept of home is inseparable from the idea of travelling, or – speaking more abstractly – movement in space. Implicitly or explicitly, all individuals define their relationship to their personal homes (however imagined) in spatial terms: one is at home, away from

home, near home, and so on.<sup>62</sup> Following from this, it can readily be seen how the white cliffs of Dover, as a much-viewed and physically distinctive marker of homecoming for people whose more particular homes were inevitably scattered all over Britain, came to function as a powerful symbol of a larger national homeland, and specifically a homeland conceptualised as an island, as inextricably linked to the sea. In doing so, it acted as the externally-orientated complement to the ruralised, more inwardly-focussed idealisations of home, centred in large part on the idyllic country village and its cottages.<sup>63</sup>

Unsurprisingly, therefore, references to the white cliffs as emblems of ‘The sever’d land of home’<sup>64</sup> saturated nineteenth- and twentieth-century cultural discourse, with many poems and novels making much of the connection. Well before Vera Lynn’s time, popular songs frequently deployed the image of the cliffs as an idealised embodiment of ‘old England’ for emigrants, sailors, soldiers fighting overseas, and returning travellers.<sup>65</sup> It was also a staple of tourist guidebooks. The 1931 ‘official guide’ to Dover commended the view of the cliffs and castle as a vivid ‘home-coming picture’ which ‘remains long in the minds of countless thousands of Britons on leaving or returning to their native shores’, and reported the words of the Bishop of London who having returned from a world tour declared that ‘Nothing has given me the same thrill as the lovely Dover cliffs as we came within sight of home.’<sup>66</sup> To the weary traveller coming back from abroad, the cliffs were presented as standing for the nation as a whole. In the final scene of the 1934 film *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, Sir Percy Blakeney (played by Leslie Howard) is shown on board ship heading away from revolution-ravaged France; gazing out at the white cliffs of Dover as they approach, he turns to his French wife and delivers with great emphasis the last line of the film: ‘Look Marguerite... England!’ Used in this way as an emblem of home, the white cliffs were felicitously capacious. They were an idealised image – *pace* Vera Lynn, no ‘bluebirds’ had ever flown over them (bluebird species not being native to the British Isles) – and this allowed the cliffs to complement and sometimes encompass more specific and personal patrias. In words for a song of 1904,

W. A. Mackenzie described how for the homecoming traveller, the image of the mother or wife waiting in the ‘little English nook, where a nestling village sleeps’ are recalled ‘In the fairest and the rarest sight that glads our eyes / In the tall white cliffs of England, glimm’ring o’er the Channel foam.’<sup>67</sup>

Embedded in the collective national consciousness, the cliffs were carried about the world by the British. Voyaging down the Congo River in the 1870s, Henry Stanley came upon a riparian swelling 2,500 yards wide – which he named Stanley Pool – on the right of which ‘towered a long row of cliffs, white and glistening, so like the cliffs of Dover that Frank [Francis John Pocock] at once exclaimed that it was a bit of England’. The explorers then named the cliffs ‘Dover Cliffs’ in an attempt, replicated *mutatis mutandis* by Europeans elsewhere, to domesticate the otherwise alienating landscape of the colonised, transforming it into the landscape of empire.<sup>68</sup> Years later, the white cliffs would be carried to foreign parts by the soldiers of two world wars, the second in particular. The recollections of ex-servicemen from all over Britain are revealing in this regard, demonstrating the strengthening association between white cliffs and nation in the mid-twentieth century. Testimonies recalling the British Expeditionary Force’s evacuation from Dunkirk in northern France mention the relief and joy soldiers felt at sighting the cliffs,<sup>69</sup> as do those describing the experiences of men returning home at war’s end. Sailing back from Bombay via Gibraltar, George Lapsley, who was from Northern Ireland, remembered how he ‘got home, and the first sign I saw of England was the white cliffs of Dover. You hear an awful lot of stories about the white cliffs of Dover, but my heart turned over when I saw them.’<sup>70</sup> Those arriving by air had similar experiences. On board a bomber bound for Britain in 1945, one former prisoner of war remembered how ‘the best moment of all’ came ‘when the pilot asked if anyone wishe[d] to see the white cliffs of Dover’, a question apparently asked of other aerial returnees.<sup>71</sup> Undoubtedly the popularity of Vera Lynn’s rendition of *There’ll be Bluebirds Over the White Cliffs of Dover* was important in reinforcing the landscape’s association with home, not least because Lynn –

with her status as the ‘forces’ sweetheart’ – was herself a reminder of civilian Britain for those living the predominantly homosocial lives of servicemen overseas.<sup>72</sup> For the soldiers, the combination of an idealised personification of the women they had left behind with the quintessential landscape of home was a potent one.

As important symbols of home and homecoming the white cliffs had particularly strong resonances for the English, but they also stood for a larger British homeland. This was because of their associations with national history. As Anthony D. Smith has argued, homelands are imagined as historic territories, their landscapes those of national ancestors and national heritage.<sup>73</sup> As a potent symbol of the homeland, the cliffs of Dover were particularly well connected to the national past, its vicissitudes and worthies. This is borne out particularly well by the white cliffs’ relationship with William Shakespeare. In Act 4 of *King Lear* the blinded Gloucester asks Edgar to lead him the edge of ‘a cliff whose high and bending head / Looks fearfully in the confined deep’.<sup>74</sup> Gloucester’s intended place of suicide – to which Edgar does not in the end lead him – was evidently a well known landmark in Tudor and Stuart England; identified as the prominent headland to the southwest of Dover town, it was subsequently named ‘Shakespeare’s Cliff’ in honour of the connection. It had lost a good deal of height due to landslips over the years, which only served to increase the propensity of literal-minded commentators to remark on how much lower in altitude and precipitousness it seemed in comparison to the Bard’s description.<sup>75</sup> Yet in truth, the physical character of Shakespeare’s Cliff was only a small part of its appeal; notwithstanding that Edgar did not take Gloucester there, it was the literary association with *King Lear* that mattered. This provided a means by which the educated of the metropolis could claim ownership of the landscape and its meaning, even from the inhabitants of Dover itself, who could not necessarily be counted upon to appreciate great literature. In 1848, the year of revolutions, one contributor to the *London Journal* wrote of the contrast between the ‘dull and ignorant’ coastguard

posted on the summit of the eponymous cliff, ‘who neither thinks nor knows any thing of Shakespeare’, and the earnest ‘strangers... every day bending their steps, recalling at each some line of the tragic scene while labouring up the steep ascent, in the expectation of the extensive and glorious view they are to enjoy from the dizzy height, with some nervous apprehension that they may “topple down headlong”’. Such sentiments can be read as defensive reactions, being a function of the increasing hold of Shakespeare over not just the educated elite, but the public at large – including the proletarian public.<sup>76</sup> And with the ripening and broadening of the cult of Shakespeare from the mid-nineteenth century on, few British guidebooks or commentaries on Dover and its environs failed to draw attention to the associations with *King Lear*.<sup>77</sup> For the ordinary visitor as much as the connoisseur, it was associations such as these, not the visual impact of the landscape, that counted for most: ‘[h]owever fine, as an object, the Shakspeare [sic] Cliff may be, there is nothing about it so remarkable as to exercise the particular interest of the topographer and the tourist, in an island like this, which, on its western shores especially, is so famous for rock-scenery were it not for the halo which the genius of Shakspeare has shed over it’.<sup>78</sup>

But the Shakespearean associations of the white cliffs were just one dimension of a wider relationship with national history and heritage. The associations with defence and specifically Britain’s history of resistance to invasion have already been remarked upon. Yet the cliffs were also seen to bear more general witness to the story of the nation. Crowned by their ancient castle, in whose precincts stood a Roman watchtower (widely believed to be the oldest building in the country), the cliffs brought to life ‘a series of vivid pictures that have made European history’.<sup>79</sup> These included the ceremonial comings and goings of various monarchs, from Edward I to Victoria, the defeat of the French under Eustace the Monk in 1295, the Spanish Armada, and much else besides: ‘On what grand historic scenes – on what memorable festivals – have yonder cliffs looked down!’, asked one guidebook in the 1870s.<sup>80</sup>

Lapidary statements signalling how the cliffs were ‘grandly associated with nearly every page of British history’ loomed large in the discourse throughout.<sup>81</sup> As one belletrist publication from the 1950s put it, ‘The noble rampart of the chalk between Shakespeare’s Cliff and the South Foreland bear more perhaps than any other stretch of our coast, the burden of legendary England and of two thousand years of memory’.<sup>82</sup>

Perceived as witnesses to British history, the cliffs were also seen as ancient, constituent parts of the national heritage and comforting markers of continuity. Perhaps ignorant of the fact that the manmade Admiralty Pier at Dover had done much to limit the effects of erosion, tourist guidebooks pointed to how the ‘chalky heights’ of the white cliffs, ‘strong in their natural strength, seem to defy both age, decay, and the fiercest onslaughts of Father Time’<sup>83</sup> – this claimed rocky asperity also reinforcing their quondam associations with resistance to foreign threats. The cliffs were a bright and unchanging marker of national identity – and national persistence – down through the centuries. White when the Romans came, and still white today, they functioned as powerful symbols of the continuity of the homeland across more than one thousand years:

In history’s dawn we see the ancient Britons in battle array on the Dover cliffs, differing greatly in many respects from Dovorians of to-day, yet as true and patriotic as those of the Twentieth Century... Dover, from the earliest times, margined a charming bay, and although Saxons, Normans and English have slightly modified its features, the Town and Port still nestles between the tall, white cliffs, the addition of forty thousand more people to the population having altered but little the physical features.<sup>84</sup>

Whatever the ebb and flow of human history, the cliffs were imagined as continuing to testify to the persistence of the nation.

In this way, the cliffs of Dover played a significant role in what Smith has called ‘the territorialisation of memory’, acting as witnesses to the survival of the British people over time, being associated with key events in national history from the Roman invasion to World War Two, and symbolising the continuity of the national home.<sup>85</sup> The cliffs’ function in this respect grew more important from the late nineteenth century on, in the context of the accelerating pace of urbanisation and technological change, and the speeding-up of life generally that was experienced across European societies at this time.<sup>86</sup> While these developments generated great excitement and conferred palpable benefits, they could also stimulate fears of degeneration and national decline, and impose new pressures and anxieties on individuals. Against this backdrop, the continuity represented by the cliffs – as with other historic landscapes – served to bolster national identity, the underpinnings of which seemed increasingly assailed by the dislocating effects of urban-industrial modernity.<sup>87</sup> As Adorno, Raymond Williams and other commentators have pointed out, the cultural value a society typically places on the natural environment and natural landscapes is directly related to the urban-industrial development of that society: increased idealisation of land, landscape and the rural was a function of the experience of nineteenth- and twentieth-century modernity, not its antithesis.<sup>88</sup> Britain was no exception. In the context of the (real and perceived) rapidity of economic, social and cultural change from the mid-eighteenth century, natural landscapes provided reassurance that despite the changes and challenges of the contemporary world, the homeland persisted still. This homeland – as figured and limned by the cliffs – was insular; it was defined by it being surrounded by the sea. As such, it was British as well as English. Despite Blériot and what he portended, insularity remained a crucial component of British national identity, and the imagining of the white cliffs as national landscape provides compelling evidence of

this. Finally, although this national landscape was inextricably linked to the sea, and one might say the Britishness of the sea, it was focused on the island homeland rather than on the empire across the seas. Indeed, it may be that historians have exaggerated the connections between the sea, the empire and British identities<sup>89</sup> – at any rate for the people of the British Isles (for some of the inhabitants of the empire, it may have been a different story).<sup>90</sup> Throughout the modern period, the bulk of the Royal Navy was stationed in home waters. Ironically, the progressively heated late Victorian and Edwardian claims about the Navy being essential for imperial defence correlated almost perfectly with its progressive concentration in Europe.<sup>91</sup> The continued valorisation of the White Cliffs as marker of a maritime identity based on discrete insularity was the cultural counterpart to this.

Various idealised and generalised views of the English countryside performed this function, one prominent example being the powerful symbolism of the English ‘south country’ and its signature landscape of tranquil villages, verdant fields and rolling downland.<sup>92</sup> But this function was also performed by particular, individual landscapes: as in other European countries, national identities in Britain were importantly predicated on local identities, local and national patriotisms being in a symbiotic and mutually-supportive relationship across most of the modern period.<sup>93</sup> Particularity, of course, could be a source of local pride: in Dover’s case, the town was jealous of its cliffs, and fully conscious of their symbolic importance. It was for this reason that the turn-of-the-century town council, prompted by a local petition, took steps to remove a large advertisement for Quaker Oats which had been affixed to the cliff face above the harbour. Local opinion condemned the prominently-placed hoarding, all too visible from the sea, as an affront to ‘the welfare and reputation and picturesqueness of Dover’, the ‘traditions’ and ‘ancient features’ of the place.<sup>94</sup> But the offence to locality was also, and primarily, an offence to nationality: the local patriotism of Dovorians was based on outrage that ‘the historic front of “Old Albion”’ had been ‘disfigured only to proclaim the virtues of Yankee Oats’.<sup>95</sup> In



the case of the white cliffs (unlike some other valued landscapes), the national was prior, dominating the local. Perhaps the quintessential national landscape, the cliffs figured and limned the homeland, emphasising its insular character.

To an extent the nation represented by the cliffs was distinctively English: although difficult to demonstrate conclusively, it is almost certainly the case that the cliffs were more meaningful markers of home for inhabitants of England, particularly southern England, than for the Welsh or the Scots. This was in part a simple function of physical geography. The white cliffs were located in the southeast corner of England, and fronted the English Channel. They were also composed of chalk, which carried very strong associations with the English landscape, especially the down lands of the south. One book on the Kent coast published in 1914 even asseverated – quite incorrectly – that ‘we in England have a world-monopoly of chalk’.<sup>96</sup> But despite these felt connections between the white cliffs and Englishness, their importance as markers of a larger British homeland should not be underestimated. The port of Dover’s long-established position as the key place of passage to and from continental Europe played a key role here. From the eighteenth century on, people from all parts of the British Isles could identify the cliffs with the British national home. In 1772, one Yorkshire man described how catching just a glimpse of the cliffs of Dover from Calais town walls ‘gave me such satisfactory sensations as are only to be felt by such who have been absent from their native land, and on the point of returning to it’.<sup>97</sup> Fifty years later, another north countryman – son of the proprietor of the *Leeds Mercury* – described the cliffs as ‘giant ramparts to our happy land’, welcoming to the returning traveller; and one hundred years later again the Nottinghamshire-born Arthur Mee thought the white cliffs ‘the gladdest sight the Englishman [away] from home can wish to see’.<sup>98</sup> And for all that inhabitants of Scotland had recourse to alternative national landscapes which exerted a far stronger appeal at least as far as Scottishness was concerned, it would seem that the white cliffs could even exert a patriotic pull on them as Britons, also. Arriving in

Boulogne in 1765 after two years of continental travel, the writer Tobias Smollett – a British as well as a Scottish patriot, though certainly no lover of the town of Dover – nevertheless experienced intense pleasure on seeing the white cliffs, the sight reminding him of all the reasons why he was so ‘attached to his country’.<sup>99</sup> Later on, the daughter of the duke of Argyll – having just departed Dover for France in July 1814 – recorded in her diary how the view of the cliffs ‘recall a sensation of pride to every British heart’.<sup>100</sup> Later still, as we have seen, the Scottish explorer Stanley drew on the memory of the cliffs in naming features of the River Congo; and after the carnage of the Great War, the Scottish general Haig lauded their significance as a marker of homecoming, going so far as to call them ‘a most inspiring spectacle’ [which] in itself repays us for all that we have been privileged to do in the discharge of our duty to King and country’.<sup>101</sup>

Such personal views of the cliffs was bound up with the dissemination and consumption of their image – across the British Isles – in artworks, lithographic prints, photography and film. This helped further entrench their position as fixtures in British national topographies, and aided in the imagining of these topographies and in the territorialization of British national memories. Their capacity to do this cultural work was inescapably connected with their association with insularity: while England, Scotland and Wales were parts of a larger island nation-state, Britain was an island nation-state. To a degree previously underappreciated by scholars, insularity – as referenced by the cliffs – could support cultural Britishness as well as cultural Englishness. While the inland landscape of Kent was emphatically and exclusively an English landscape, being celebrated as the ‘garden of England’ and the natural habitat of that archetypal rural patriot, the sturdy yeoman, its coastline was invested with rather different national meanings. Moreover, as these meanings demonstrate, the cliffs did not support any banal, empty assertive nationalism, but were associated with specific elements of an insular national identity.<sup>102</sup> This insular Britishness proved surprisingly robust and enduring. Its beginnings correlated with the late

eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century beginnings of Britishness more generally, and as with this wider phenomenon, the conflict with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France was the crucial catalyst.<sup>103</sup> In the context of war with an enemy directly across the Channel, and one which presented a real threat of invasion, the cliffs proved a very effective delineator of the British homeland against the menace of the continental Other. As technologies of communication and dissemination developed in later years, the cliffs' symbolic power in popular imaginings of the British national community grew still stronger, reaching its apogee in the middle of the twentieth century, when the enemy was Germany rather than France but the fear of catastrophic defeat was at least as potent.

That this was so might seem odd. For Gillian Beer, 'the technology of the airplane' acted as a solvent of 'the concept of nationhood which relies upon the cultural idea of the island', and thus undermined the historically insular foundations of British identity.<sup>104</sup> Yet the nationalistic associations attaching to the white cliffs deep into the twentieth century suggest otherwise. The strength of these associations was such that it could be argued that the national border was the object of more celebration in Britain than in other modern nation-states. Certainly, it is difficult to identify equivalent landscape features in other countries that did the quality and quantity of cultural work done by the white cliffs (perhaps the nearest comparator is the Statue of Liberty, but this is almost entirely part of the built environment, has a generalized and global as much as a specific and nationalistic appeal, and is in any case less landscape than landmark – or icon).<sup>105</sup> While particular natural landscapes certainly played key roles in the construction and symbolisation of other countries' national identities, few of these landscapes were located on the geographical edge of their corresponding nation states (the Norwegian coastline might be seen as a possible exception, but it is too large and various to have any pronounced quality of particularity). Typically, indeed, they are located deep within the heart of the national territory: the river Volga and Mount Fuji are two possible examples.<sup>106</sup> This helps support a conclusion

that insularity was – and perhaps remains – a crucial component of modern British national identity; certainly, the place of the white cliffs in the national landscape imaginary provides suggestive evidence in this regard. Indeed, while somewhat beyond the scope of this article, it is worth noting that distinctive and evocative markers of difference are still very important in contemporary Britain. In thanking donors for their contribution to the National Trust’s 2012 fundraising campaign for the purchase of more chalk coastline near Dover, the organisation’s outgoing Director-General Dame Fiona Reynolds remarked that ‘nothing symbolises island nation as much as the White Cliffs’, sentiments with which many who had given money doubtless concurred.<sup>107</sup> (For Sally Bybee, they were an ‘historic symbol of Britain and represent[ed] our heritage and status as an island nation; for William Hird, they were ‘the bastion of England... raising echoes all through our island story’; and for Francis Wright and Stephen Foot, they ‘symbolise[d] the beauty and strength of this island, and the steadfastness of its people’.)<sup>108</sup>

Finally, the white cliffs also provide evidence of the strength – in the age of empire – of conceptualisations of national identity centred on the historic island homeland rather than more recently acquired territories outside Europe. For inhabitants of Britain, at any rate, the cliffs were only indirectly connected with Britain’s imperial mission as it was variously conceived between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. That said, however, the island-focused patriotic charge carried by the cliffs was not incompatible with the imperialist project, nor was it uncongenial to the agents of this project. We have seen how memories of the white cliffs and what they signified were carried to colonial borderlands in the imaginations of explorers, servicemen and emigrants. Their image could also be valorised by Dominion imperialists who had never previously set foot in Britain, one interwar example being the young R. G. Menzies, future prime minister of Australia (who in later life took great pride in being invested, at Dover Castle, in the ceremonial office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports).<sup>109</sup> But typically, the connotations of the white cliffs were insular in character; the associations they triggered

were inward- rather than outward-facing in orientation. At most – as in the case of Menzies – the cliffs could be made stand for the island heart of a larger empire, and even here the accent was on their relationship to a specifically insular rather than more widely-drawn imperial homeland. In 1935, on sighting the white cliffs for the first time, Menzies felt great emotion at finally coming ‘home’; yet as he said on another occasion, ‘the boundaries of Great Britain are not on the Kentish coast but at Cape York and Invercargill’.<sup>110</sup>

#### IV

Visually, the cliffs of Dover are relatively unusual landscape features, and high-flown claims of their distinctiveness resounded down through the centuries. Writing in 1914, Charles G. Harper felt confident that there was ‘nothing in the rest of the whole wide world in the least resembling’ the ‘bastioned chalky heights’ of ‘the “white cliffs of Albion”’.<sup>111</sup> Unsurprisingly enough, claims of their aesthetic superiority to the landscape on the other side of the Channel were often heard, one ultra-patriotic writer of the 1820s reckoning that the ‘beauty’ and ‘power’ of the Dover coastline, with its ‘romantic and lofty’ cliffs, was such that a ‘stranger... who lands in Dover for the first time, and compares the delightful Picturesque scenery before him with the opposite shore near Calais, will naturally imagine that he is treading on enchanted Ground’.<sup>112</sup> Other eyes saw things rather differently. Commissioned by the Swedish government to travel to North America on a botanical fact-finding mission, the eighteenth-century Linnaean naturalist Pehr Kalm provides one early example. On his voyage out to the New World, Kalm had an opportunity to view both the French and British sides of the Pas de Calais in 1748, when the boat on which he was travelling was buffeted from coast to coast in high seas. ‘[T]he land on both sides has the same *facies* and appearance’, he remarked, ‘so that if one who had seen the coast of England should

get to see the coast of France here, and did not know it was such, he would certainly believe that it was the English coast... and English hills'.<sup>113</sup>

The reason why so many British men and women saw things differently over the course of the next two centuries is bound up with the associational value of landscape. It is worth repeating that judgements about the value of any landscape – even aesthetic judgements – are never reliant on physical characteristics alone. For the British the physical appearance of the white cliffs may have made more plausible claims of distinctiveness, but they alone could not support the weight of the patriotic load carried by the landscape. Had it been otherwise, the chalk cliffs of the Seven Sisters on the Sussex coast – which, it could be argued, are visually more impressive than those at Dover – would have played a more prominent role in constructions of national identity. In explaining the nationalistic significance of the White Cliffs of Dover, exogenous factors are crucial. The cliffs' associations with national defence, homecoming and homeland, national culture and history mattered more than their physical characteristics taken in isolation. That this was so suggests a more general conclusion: it is only through considering the associational value of landscape that full appreciation of landscape's role in the construction of national identities can be gained. Indeed, as can be demonstrated by the experience of those excluded from or unmoved by the nationalistic associations of landscapes like the cliffs of Dover, the visual was not enough. Unbuttressed by associations of patriotism and belonging, the visual could disappoint, even alienate. When he first saw the white cliffs Menzies confided to his diary that 'Our journey to Mecca has ended, and our minds abandoned to those reflections which can so strangely... move the souls of those who go "home" to a land they have never seen'.<sup>114</sup> Yet England was at the centre of Menzies's world and sense of identity; things could be very different for others. As a girl growing up in Antigua, the writer Jamaica Kincaid was given an English education, instructed to revere England, value its customs and respect the Royal Family. Yet when later in life she travelled to England

for the first time, she did not feel as Menzies did, like a pilgrim returning to her spiritual home. Rather, she discovered that ‘The moment I wished every sentence, everything I knew, that began with England would end with “and then it all died, we don’t know how, it just all died” was when I saw the white cliffs of Dover’. As a schoolgirl Kincaid had been taught to sing hymns and poems ‘about a longing to see the white cliffs of Dover again’, despite never having seen them herself. Years later, when she did, ‘they were not that pearly majestic thing I used to sing about... The white cliffs of Dover, when finally I saw them, were cliffs, but they were not white... they were dirty and they were steep’.<sup>115</sup> For Mervyn Morris and Jamaica Kincaid, the cliffs were cliffs, seeming ‘very ordinary’, ‘dirty’ and ‘steep’. For the British men and women who travelled to Dover with them, and for British people generally throughout the modern period, the cliffs were not cliffs; they signified rather more. This would remain the case into the twenty-first century. As comments appended to National Trust donations put it in 2012, ‘These are more than cliffs, they’re history, they’re habitat, they’re Britain... Historical defiant defensive known world-wide immortalised in song bastion of strength part of my home’.<sup>116</sup>

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Hugh Cunningham, 'The Language of Patriotism 1750-1914', *History Workshop Journal*, xii (1981), 8-33.

<sup>2</sup> For a useful survey, see Peter Mandler, 'What is National Identity? Definitions and Applications in Modern British Historiography', *Modern Intellectual History*, iii (2006), 271-97.

<sup>3</sup> [William E. Gladstone], 'Germany, France, and England', *Edinburgh Review*, cxxxii (Oct. 1870), 588.

<sup>4</sup> J. A. Froude, *Oceana* (new ed., London, 1886), p. 16; E. A. Freeman, 'Latest theories on the origin of the English', *Contemporary Review*, lvii (Jan. 1890), 45; Robert Louis Stevenson, 'The English Admirals', *Virginibus Puerisque and other papers* (1881), p. 193.

<sup>5</sup> Mervyn Morris, 'A West Indian Student in England', *Caribbean Quarterly*, viii (Dec. 1962), 28.

<sup>6</sup> A point made by Eric Kaufmann and Oliver Zimmer, 'In Search of the Authentic Nation: Landscape and National Identity in Canada and Switzerland', *Nations and Nationalism*, iv (1998), 484-5.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, *Geography and National Identity*, ed. David Hooson (Oxford, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> *The Iconography of Landscape*, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge, 1988); David Matless, *Landscape and Englishness* (1998); David Lowenthal, 'British National Identity and the English Landscape', *Rural History*, ii (1991), 205-30; Catherine Brace, Looking Back: The Cotswolds and English National Identity, c.1890-1950, *Journal of Historical Geography*, xxv (1999), 502-516, and 'Finding England Everywhere: Regional Identity and the Construction of National Identity, 1890-1940', *Ecumene*, vi (1999), 90-109.

<sup>9</sup> Martin J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit 1850-1980* (Cambridge, 1981). Cf. Peter Mandler, 'Against "Englishness": English Culture and the Limits to Rural Nostalgia, 1850-1940', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., vii (1997), 155-75; Paul Readman, 'Preserving the English Landscape, c.1870-1914', *Cultural and Social History*, v (2008), 197-218.

<sup>10</sup> Alun Howkins, 'The Discovery of Rural England', in *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920*, ed. Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (1986) [hereafter Howkins, 'Discovery of Rural England'], pp. 62-88.

<sup>11</sup> Though Robert Colls's work on Northumbria is an important exception; see *Northumbria: History and Identity 547-2000*, ed. Robert Colls (Chichester, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, ed. D. W. Meinig (Oxford, 1979) [hereafter *Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*], pp. 3, 33-4.



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- <sup>13</sup> ‘The essential indeterminacy of natural beauty manifests itself in the fact that *any* fragment of nature... can become beautiful... And this has little or nothing to do with formal proportions and the like’: T. W. Adorno, ‘The Beauty of Nature’, in Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (1984 [1970]) [hereafter Adorno, ‘Beauty’], p. 104.
- <sup>14</sup> As Immanuel Kant hypothesised in his *Critique of Judgement*, ‘...were we to play a trick on our lover of the beautiful, and plant in the ground artificial flowers..., and perch artfully carved birds on the branches of trees, and were he to find out how he had been deceived, the immediate interest which these things previously had for him would at once vanish... The fact is that our intuition and reflection must have as their concomitant the thought that the beauty in question is nature’s handwork; and this is the sole basis of the immediate interest that is taken in it...’: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 128-9.
- <sup>15</sup> Robert Elliot, ‘Faking Nature’, *Inquiry*, xxv (1982), 81-93. Elliot’s arguments are extended further in his *Faking Nature* (1997).
- <sup>16</sup> Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1974), pp. 93-4.
- <sup>17</sup> Edward Lynam, *The Map of the British Isles of 1546* (Jenkintown, PA, 1934), pp. 1-3.
- <sup>18</sup> William Camden, *Britain* (1610 [1586]) [hereafter Camden, *Britain*], p. 344.
- <sup>19</sup> Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (2 vols, 1962 [1724-6]), I, p. 122.
- <sup>20</sup> John Aiken, *England Delineated* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1790) [hereafter Aiken, *England*], p. 268.
- <sup>21</sup> Ann Radcliffe, *A Journey Made in the Summer of 1794* (Dublin, 1795), p. 369.
- <sup>22</sup> L. Fussell, *A Journey Round the Coast of Kent* (1818), pp. 142-3.
- <sup>23</sup> *The Lady’s Newspaper*, 28 Aug. 1847, p. 207.
- <sup>24</sup> In 1863, the number of passengers on the Dover-Calais route was 123,025; in the 1890s the annual total reached 300,000; in 1910 the combined total number of travellers carried by the Dover-Calais and Dover-Ostend routes was over 590,000: J. B. Jones, *Annals of Dover* (Dover, 1916) [hereafter Jones, *Annals*], pp. 159-60, 167.
- <sup>25</sup> Arthur D. Lewis, *The Kent Coast* (1911), pp. 266-7.
- <sup>26</sup> For these technologies, see David Brett, *The Construction of Heritage* (Cork, 1996), esp. pp. 65-8.
- <sup>27</sup> See Elizabeth Helsinger, ‘Turner and the Representation of England’, in *Landscape and Power*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago, 1994), esp. pp. 105-6.
- <sup>28</sup> *Manchester Times*, 31 Dec. 1881.
- <sup>29</sup> Camden, *Britain*, p. 1.

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<sup>30</sup> *A Guide-Book and Itinerary of Dover* (Dover, 1896), p. 30; A. G. Bradley, *England's Outpost* ([?1921]), pp. 317-18.

<sup>31</sup> W. G. Rawlinson, *The Engraved Work of J. M. W. Turner* (2 vols, 1908), I, pp. 125-6.

<sup>32</sup> The comparative scholarly neglect of this phenomenon is worth remarking upon. While the connections between pastoral landscapes and Englishness have been extensively discussed, it remains the case – as Jan Rüger has recently pointed out – that relatively little attention has been given to the relationship between coastal landscapes and discourses of national identity: Jan Rüger, *The Great Naval Game: Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 170-4. That discussion that does exist tends to be rather fleeting, or very general: see, for example, R. Colls, *Identity of England* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 237-42; Ken Lunn and Ann Day, 'Britain as Island: National Identity and the Sea', in *History, Nationhood and the Question of Britain*, ed. Helen Brocklehurst and Robert Phillips (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 124-36; Robert Shannan Peckham, 'The Uncertain State of Islands: National Identity and the Discourse of Islands in Nineteenth-Century Britain and Greece', *J. Hist. Geo.*, xxix (2003), 499-515.

<sup>33</sup> Cynthia F. Behrman, *Victorian myths of the sea* (Athens, OH, 1977). See also Geoff Quilley, "'All Ocean is Her Own": The Image of the Sea and the Identity of the Maritime Nation in Eighteenth-Century British Art', in *Imagining Nations*, ed. Geoffrey Cubitt (Manchester, 1998), pp. 132-52.

<sup>34</sup> Charles Dibdin, *Observations on a Tour Through Almost the Whole of England* (2 vols, 1801), I, p. 21.

<sup>35</sup> One children's publication of 1858 celebrated the day 'when the sea broke through with a roar and a bound' as one which had given Britain 'a distinct place among the nations of the world': Ida Wilson, *Our Native Land* (1858), p. 72.

<sup>36</sup> E. A. Freeman, 'Alter Orbis', *Contemp. Rev.*, xli (June 1882), 1042.

<sup>37</sup> Keith Wilson, *Channel Tunnel Visions 1850-1945* (1994) [hereafter Wilson, *Channel Tunnel*], 188-92; Barbara Castle, *The Castle Diaries 1964-1976* (1990), p. 545.

<sup>38</sup> Lord Randolph Churchill: *Hansard*, cccxxvii (27 June 1888), 1500. For the history of the channel tunnel, see Wilson, *Channel Tunnel*.

<sup>39</sup> See, e.g., Marjorie Morgan, *National Identities and Travel in Victorian Britain* (Basingstoke, 2001), esp. pp. 196ff.

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, Camden, *Britain*, p. 344; *Handbook for Travellers in Kent* (5<sup>th</sup> ed., 1892), p. 50; Ford Madox Hueffer [Ford], *The Cinque Ports* (Edinburgh, 1900), p. 242; *The Dover Official Guide and Souvenir* (Dover, 1930), p. 13.

<sup>41</sup> *Dover: The Gateway to England* (Dover, 1931) [hereafter *Dover: Gateway*], p. 6; *A Guide-Book and Itinerary of Dover* (Dover 1896), p. 30; *A Pictorial and Descriptive Guide to Dover* (6<sup>th</sup> ed., [1924-5]), p. ix; Samuel T. Davies, *Dover* (1869), p. 3.

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- <sup>42</sup> *Black's Guide to Kent* (Edinburgh, 1878) [hereafter *Black's Guide*], p. 213.
- <sup>43</sup> *The Oxford companion to J. M. W. Turner*, ed. E. Joll, M. Butlin and L. Herrmann (Oxford, 2001), p. 79.
- <sup>44</sup> Eric Shanes, *Turner's Rivers, Harbours and Coasts* (London, 1981), pp. 28-9, 33-4 and plates 46, 67.
- <sup>45</sup> John Ruskin, *The Harbours of England* (Orpington, 1895), pp. 63-4.
- <sup>46</sup> William Cobbett, *Rural Rides*, ed. G. D. H. and M. Cole (2 vols, 1930), I, pp. 227-30.
- <sup>47</sup> For invasion scare literature, see I. F. Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War 1763-1984* (1966) [hereafter Clarke, *Voices*].
- <sup>48</sup> *Hansard*, lxxxii (30 July 1845), 1223-4.
- <sup>49</sup> Cited in Clarke, *Voices*, pp. 100-1.
- <sup>50</sup> Brian A. Elliot, *Blériot* (Stroud, 2000), pp. 125-6.
- <sup>51</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 20 Dec. 1918, p. 7; J. B. Firth, *Dover and the Great War* (Dover, n.d.), pp. 118-21.
- <sup>52</sup> G. Beer, 'The Island and the Aeroplane', in *Nation and Narration*, ed. H. K. Bhabha (1990), pp. 273, 286-7.
- <sup>53</sup> *Hansard*, Commons, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., ccxcii (30 July 1934), 2339.
- <sup>54</sup> Alice Duer Miller, *The White Cliffs* (1941). The poem began, 'I have loved England, dearly and deeply, / Since that first morning, shining and pure, / The white cliffs of Dover I saw rising steeply / Out of the sea that once made her secure'.
- <sup>55</sup> K. R. M. Short, "'The White Cliffs of Dover': Promoting the Anglo-American Alliance in World War II', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, ii (1982), 13-25; F. M. Leventhal, 'British Writers, American Readers: Women's Voices in Wartime', *Albion*, xxxii (2000), 1-18.
- <sup>56</sup> Reginald Foster, *Dover Front* (1941), p. 7; Ben Robertson, *I Saw England* (1941), p. 85; A. M. Sperber, *Murrow* (1986), p. 161.
- <sup>57</sup> *The Times*, 25 Jan. 1965, p. 8.
- <sup>58</sup> *Daily Mirror*, 15 Sept. 2000, pp. 12-13.
- <sup>59</sup> Stephen Heathorn, *For Home, Country, and Race* (Toronto, 2000) [hereafter Heathorn, *For Home*], p. 151.
- <sup>60</sup> Camden, *Britain*, p. 344.
- <sup>61</sup> In the Romance languages, by contrast, 'home' is more typically used simply as a synonym for 'house'. See David E. Sopher, 'The Landscape of Home', in *Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, pp. 130-1.
- <sup>62</sup> As one geographer has put it, 'Home... cannot be understood except in terms of journey': J. D. Porteous, 'Home: The Territorial Core', *Geographical Review*, lxvi (1976), 387.
- <sup>63</sup> Heathorn, *For Home*, pp. 141-51.

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<sup>64</sup> *Bow Bells*, xxv (Nov. 1876), 490.

<sup>65</sup> Examples of scores held in the British Library include George Linley and W. Neuland, *The White Cliffs of England* (1833); John F. Duke, *Farewell White Cliffs of Old England* (1899); Anthony Johnstone and W. A. Mackenzie, *The White Cliffs of England* (1904) [hereafter Johnstone and Mackenzie, *White Cliffs*]; Percy Edgar and Henry E. Pether, *The White Cliffs of England (are the White Cliffs of Home)* (1916); Max Kester and Max Saunders, *The White Cliffs of Dover* (1935); Harry Leon and Leo Towers, *The White Cliffs of Dover: A Song of Old England* (1936).

<sup>66</sup> *Dover: Gateway*, p. 7.

<sup>67</sup> ‘In some little English nook, where a nestling village sleeps, / There’s a mother sits and waits, or a wife that weeps, or a wife that weeps. / Ah! we hear their loving call, and we see them one and all / In the fairest and the rarest sight that glads our eyes, / In the tall white cliffs of England, glimm’ring o’er the Channel foam, / From our dear ones sending welcome to the wandr’ers nearing home’: Johnstone and Mackenzie, *White Cliffs*.

<sup>68</sup> Henry M. Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent* (2 vols, New York, 1988 [London, 1878]), II, pp. 254-5.

<sup>69</sup> For example, W. L. McWilliam, an orderly with the Royal Army Medical Corps, from Devon: ‘Civil and Military Medical Services of World War II’, Typescript Imperial War Museum, 73/58/1, p. 73; Tommy Ward, army officer: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/ww2peopleswar/stories/12/a4654712.shtml> [Accessed 29 August 2008].

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/ww2peopleswar/stories/39/a4111039.shtml> [Accessed 29 August 2008].

<sup>71</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/ww2peopleswar/stories/91/a4644191.shtml> [Accessed 29 August 2008].

<sup>72</sup> For Vera Lynn’s appeal as ‘the perfect reminder of home’, see Zoe Jane Varnals, ‘The Entertainments National Service Association 1939-1946,’ unpublished PhD dissertation, King’s College London (2009), p. 230.

<sup>73</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford, 1999) [hereafter Smith, *Myths*], pp. 149-59.

<sup>74</sup> William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Lear*, in William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works: Compact edition*, ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford, 1988), Act 4 Scene 1, p. 964, and Act 4 Scene 5, pp. 966-7.

<sup>75</sup> See for example, Aiken, *England*, p. 276.

<sup>76</sup> For radical bardolatry, see Antony Taylor, ‘Shakespeare and Radicalism: The Uses and Abuses of Shakespeare in Nineteenth-Century Popular Politics’, *Historical Journal*, xlv (2002), 357-79.

<sup>77</sup> For good examples, see *Black’s Guide*, pp. 207-9; Mackenzie Walcott, *A Guide to the Coast of Kent* (1859), pp. 14, 88; *John Heywood’s Illustrated Guide to Dover* ([1894]) [hereafter *Heywood’s Guide*], pp. 7-9.

<sup>78</sup> *Saturday Magazine*, 10 (Apr. 1837), 138.

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- <sup>79</sup> *The Dover Official Guide and Souvenir* (Dover, 1930), p. 9.
- <sup>80</sup> *Black's Guide*, p. 213.
- <sup>81</sup> *Heywood's Guide*, pp. 6-7, 10-12 at 10.
- <sup>82</sup> Aubrey de Selincourt, *The Channel Shore* (1953), p. 10.
- <sup>83</sup> Samuel T. David, *Dover* (1869), p. 2.
- <sup>84</sup> Jones, *Annals*, pp. 430-1, and see also *Heywood's Guide*, pp. 5-6.
- <sup>85</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 134ff, and Smith, *Myths*, esp. pp. 150-2.
- <sup>86</sup> For this context, see Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Cambridge, MA, 2003).
- <sup>87</sup> See Paul Readman, 'The Place of the Past in English Culture, c.1890-1914', *Past and Present*, clxxxvi (2005) [hereafter Readman, 'Place of the Past'], 147-99.
- <sup>88</sup> '...there is no room for natural beauty in periods when nature has an overwhelming presence for man, as seems to be the case with peasant populations which are known to be insensitive to the aesthetic qualities of natural scenery because to them nature is merely an immediate object to be acted upon': Adorno, 'Beauty', p. 96. See also Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (1985 [1973]): '...there is almost an inverse proportion, in the twentieth century, between the relative importance of the working rural economy and the cultural importance of rural ideas' (p. 248).
- <sup>89</sup> For some suggestive remarks on this, see Stephen Conway, 'Empire, Europe and British Naval Power', in *Empire, the Sea and Global History*, ed. David Cannadine (Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 22-40.
- <sup>90</sup> The Australian politician and post-war prime minister R. G. Menzies provides one example. Menzies 'idealised England' and its landscape, culture and institutions – not least the white cliffs – combining this with an understanding that 'Australians were simply Britons in another part of the world', and as such were integral to a larger imperial unity. See Judith Brett, *Robert Menzies' Forgotten People* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Carlton, 2007) [hereafter Brett, *Menzies' Forgotten People*], pp. 114-23, 190-2, at pp. 190 and 192.
- <sup>91</sup> P. P. O'Brien, 'The Titan Refreshed: Imperial Overstretch and the British Navy before the First World War', *P & P*, clxxii (2001), 146-69.
- <sup>92</sup> Howkins, 'Discovery of Rural England'.
- <sup>93</sup> Readman, 'Place of the Past', 176-9. Germany provides perhaps the most useful comparator: see esp. A. Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1997).
- <sup>94</sup> *A Beautiful World*, ix (1900-1903), 9-10, 18; *Dover Observer*, 24 Aug. 1901, p. 7.

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<sup>95</sup> *Dover Observer*, 7 Sept. 1901, p. 7; *Dover and County Chronicle*, 12 Oct. 1901, p. 3.

<sup>96</sup> Charles G. Harper, *The Kentish Coast* (1914) [hereafter Harper, *Kentish Coast*], pp. 271-2.

<sup>97</sup> Cornelius Cayley, *A Tour thorough [sic] Holland, Flanders, and part of France: In the Year 1772* (Leeds, [?1773]), p. 104.

<sup>98</sup> Edward Baines, jun., 'Letters from the Continent (no. 1)', *Leeds Mercury*, 5 Jan. 1833; Arthur Mee, *Kent* (1936), p. 144.

<sup>99</sup> Letter XLI from Boulogne, 13 June 1765, in Tobias Smollett, *Travels through France and Italy* (Oxford, 1981 [1766]), p. 327. For Smollett's views of Dover, see *ibid.*, pp. 4-6; for his 'sympathetic Britishness', see Evan Gottlieb, *Feeling British: Sympathy and National Identity in Scottish and English Writing, 1707-1832* (Lewisburg, PA, 2007), pp. 61-98.

<sup>100</sup> 'Diary of Lady Charlotte Susan Maria Campbell Bury, July, 1814', in *Diary Illustrative of the Times of George the Fourth Interspersed with Original Letters from... Queen Caroline*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA, 1838), p. 18.

<sup>101</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 20 Dec. 1918, p. 7. Even in the twenty-first century, the cliffs retain strong associations with Britain and Britishness in the popular mindset. This is nicely illustrated by the enormously enthusiastic and patriotic public response to the National Trust's 2012 'White Cliffs of Dover Appeal', which – in the teeth of a global recession – raised £1.2 million from over 16,500 people in just 133 days, the money going towards the purchase of 0.8 miles of coastline.

Examination of the hundreds of messages of support posted by donors on the appeal's webpage suggests that about as many described the cliffs as a British as they did an English landmark. 'Leanne, Mark and Aidan' donated 'Because we're proud to be British and the White Cliffs just say "British"!'; Stella Wood gave because they were 'an iconic feature of Great Britain', while Karen White's generosity sprang from their being 'A true Great British treasure'. For another donor ('GE'), 'This is one area that... everyone associates with the UK'. <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/?id=298>; <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/?id=318>; <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/?id=253>; <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/how-youve-helped/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/> [all accessed 14 Dec. 2012].

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (1995).

<sup>103</sup> See Linda Colley, *Britons* (New Haven, 1992).

<sup>104</sup> Gillian Beer, 'Discourses of the Island', in *Literature and Science as Modes of Expression*, ed. F. Amrine (Dordrecht, 1989), p. 21.

<sup>105</sup> Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens* (1985), pp. 3-17, esp. 11-17.

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<sup>106</sup> This is also true for less locationally-specific national landscapes, like the Canadian prairies and the Russian steppes, both of which played important roles in their respective nation's nationalist imaginaries. See, for example, Christopher Ely, *This Meager Nature: Landscape and National Identity in Imperial Russia* (Dekalb, IL, 2002).

<sup>107</sup> <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/how-youve-helped/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/supporters/view-page/item1017114/> [accessed 14 Dec. 2012].

<sup>108</sup> <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/?id=395>;  
<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/?id=743>;  
<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/?id=811> [all accessed 14 Dec. 2012].

<sup>109</sup> Brett, *Menzies' Forgotten People*, pp. 190-1.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114-15, 122.

<sup>111</sup> Harper, *Kentish Coast*, pp. 271-2.

<sup>112</sup> Thomas Lowndes, *Tracts in Poems and Verse* (Dover, 1825), pp. 14-15.

<sup>113</sup> *Kalm's Account of his Visit to England on his way to America in 1748* (London and New York, 1892), p. 455.

<sup>114</sup> Brett, *Menzies' Forgotten People*, p. 115.

<sup>115</sup> Jamaica Kincaid, 'On Seeing England for the First Time', *Transitions*, li (1991), 40.

<sup>116</sup> [Sic]; Fiona Whitworth (<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/?id=37>), accessed 14 Dec. 2012), and Paul Andrews (<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals/white-cliffs-of-dover-appeal/?id=306>), accessed 14 Dec. 2012).